113, 101, 221, 619, 184, 565, 701, 721 Bedouin MJ4

[For information on the Bedouin see 1: Coon, M1 Middle East, cat. 116, pp. 197-204.]

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CHAPTER VI

Badawin Social System

SETTLERS AND NOMADS

369 The Arabs divide themselves into two main groups:
184 Al Hadhar and Al Bádia.

Al hadhar (singular: *hadhari*) are those who dwell in permanent stone or mud houses, i.e. townsfolk or villagers; *al bádia* are those who live nomad lives, own camels and live in black hair-tents (*biyut sha'ar*).

From this word *bádia* comes also our word Badawin (often written in French style, Bedouin), which is not used or understood in Arabia proper.

The dweller in the black tents, although he may occasionally speak of himself as a man of *badu* or nomad calling (e.g. "*Hana Badu*"—we are Badawin, etc.), he does so to signify that he is a wild, simple man of the desert, and not versed in the cunning ways of settled life.

[186] He far more often refers to himself and his people by the proud title "'Arab"—e.g. *'Arabna sannadu, 'Arabna nizzalu l ala Subaihiyah* —Our Arabs have gone up into the interior, or, Our Arabs have camped at Subaihiyah.

If a Badawin meets a nomad stranger in his territory he will enquire, after salaams and general greetings, *Inta minain ya walad?*—From whence art thou, O youth? The answer is, *'Ana min 'Arab fulan* —I am from such and such a person's Arabs.

369 Not to be confused with the 'Arab or pure-bred Badawin, are the
361 'Arabdar or 'Arab-ad-Dar. The latter is the name commonly given in Kuwait and also, I believe, in Najd to those semi-nomads who are found in black tents on the borders of the great desert, and who camp close to the towns in summer, and move out into the interior, a matter of 80 to 100 miles from their homes proper, in winter. Many of them also own small house property in the cities they are attached

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water), and so forth, until he had completed the tale of the road. Armed with the information he had gained, he led the Bani Malik to Safwan, where they overthrew and almost exterminated the 'Ajwad, sparing only a handful of men and forty women, or according to another version of the story forty women with child. The remnant, whatever may have been its composition, took refuge in the Hawizah marshes, but returned after a short period to 'Iraq, where they were joined by the Budur, who claim descent from the Ruwalah 'Anizah, the Shuraifat, a tribe of Southern Arabian origin (Qahtan), and the Juwarin, long settled in Mesopotamia. Shabib, by virtue of his relationship with the Al Khusaubah and his military powers, had assumed the leadership of the Bani Malik, and to him the 'Ajwad addressed themselves with proposals of peace. He demanded for the killing of his father no payment of blood money, but that he should be accorded the honours of overlord, that they should kiss his hand when they approached him, and that he should not be required to rise in response to their salutation. To this stipulation, which was regarded as an instance of high generosity, they agreed, and the Bani Malik and 'Ajwad, united under one chief, made so formidable a combination that they attracted a third ally, the Bani Sa'id, a tribe of the Jazirah. These three formed and still form the Muntafiq league.

The three divisions as we know them are not tribes, but tribal groups. The Bani Sa'id, who are by far the smallest, appear to be the most cohesive. Their district lies in little-known country in the desert between the Tigris and the Gharraf. Though they own some cultivation of the tail of the great canals they would seem to approach the Badawin more closely in their mode of life than is the case with the other two members of the league, and their constituents have the character of sections of a homogeneous tribe rather than that of independent units gathered into a confederacy.

The 'Ajwad are the least compact. Their country is on the Gharraf, and the Euphrates above and below Nasiriyah; they are therefore much more accessible. They are riverain Arabs of the Shawiyah type (Shawáwī), half-settled cultivators and half-nomadic owners of flocks. They spend the late winter, spring and early summer in the desert with their sheep, leaving some of their number in the reed villages by the rivers to till the fields.

THE BADU OF SOUTHERN ARABIA

By W. P. THESIGER, D.S.O.

114 Lecture given on September 28, 1949, Lieut.-General Sir Adrian Carton de Wiart, V.C., K.B.E., C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., in the chair.

The CHAIRMAN: To-day Mr. Thesiger is going to talk to us about the countries around the Red Sea, with which he has been acquainted since childhood. He was born in Abyssinia. Before the recent war he was with the Sudan Civil Service. In 1940 he was sent to Abyssinia and volunteered for service there with the Ethiopian Patriot Force, in which he was awarded the D.S.O.

Later he was sent on special duty to Damascus and was able to resume his Arabic studies. Since the war he has carried out several remarkable trips to explore the heart of the area known as the "Empty Quarter," and he is now going to tell us about the most recent of these.

101 178 184 I AM going to talk about the Badu of Southern Arabia; that is to say, the camel-owning nomads who live in and around the Empty Quarter. I wish to make it clear that I am talking about the Badu, or Baduin, and not about Arabs who cultivate or live in towns, for there is all the difference in the world between them. I do not suppose that a sophisticated young town Arab would be flattered if you referred to him as a Badui, though it is surprising how many of them do proudly claim Badu origin, and I do know that no Badui would like to be called a townsman or cultivator. At first sight the Badu of Southern Arabia appear to be very different from those of the north, but I believe that this difference is largely superficial and due to the clothes which they wear. I do not think that either a Sa'ari from the deserts just north of the Hadhramaut or a Wahibi from South-Eastern Oman would feel himself much out of place in an encampment of the Rualla. On the other hand, I think that a townsman from Aden or Muscat would always be conspicuous in Damascus. I wish also to make it quite clear that I am describing conditions in Southern Arabia and not in Arabia as a whole. In the past Badu life was everywhere much the same, harder in some places and easier in others. The last quarter of a century has, however, seen the most revolutionary changes in the north. There Ibn Saud has imposed his iron will upon the tribes. He has subjected the nomad to the rule of the settled Arab, stamped out raiding, and taxed the Badui as well as the cultivator. The same process has been carried out in Trans-Jordan, in Syria, and in [177] Iraq. It was largely the use of the motor-car which made it possible to bring the Badu under control, for that robbed them of their age-old inaccessibility. Previously they had only to retire into the desert to be safe from pursuit, but now they are at the mercy of a motorized patrol, unable to get away and with nowhere to hide.

178 619 Cars have, however, not yet penetrated into the southern desert, and there the old life still goes on. I do not suppose, except that the Badu are now armed with rifles, that their way of life has greatly changed since the times of Abraham. In the south they are still dominant and even unchallenged. It is true that before they enter the valley of the Hadhramaut